

Indiana State Representative Terri J. Austin

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Take this opportunity to share your views

2003 Session will bring legislative, fiscal challenges



STATE OF INDIANA
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COMMERCE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, VICE CHAIR
PUBLIC POLICY, ETHICS AND VETERANS AFFAIRS
TECHNOLOGY, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
WAYS AND MEANS

Winter, 2003

Dear Friend:

The 2003 Indiana Legislative Session is now underway. I am honored to begin the responsibility of serving as your newly elected State Representative in our House District 36.

Indiana's two-year budget must be written in this session. Deciding how to accumulate and disburse state funds is no easy task. Indiana's uncertain economy compounds the budgetary challenge. In addition, each legislator maintains differing views, solutions and priorities regarding economic problems. The key is for legislators to realize that the most important priority is WHAT IS IN INDIANA'S BEST INTEREST.

As the result of the national recession, Indiana and 32 other states are experiencing revenue shortfalls. Nevertheless, I believe we can achieve our mission and provide sound, reasonable solutions to our budget crises. Educational opportunities for all our citizens must be protected and enhanced to meet future workplace requirements. This need is especially critical in Madison County, where once again, we are faced with decreasing manufacturing employment opportunities. Critical state services must be maintained but existing state programs must be carefully scrutinized to reduce waste and duplication of government activity. Just as families must "tighten the belt" when funds are low, state government must do the same and only wisely spend tax dollars.

I have been attending as many local government meetings as the legislative schedule permits to hear our community's concerns. In addition, I hope you will find some time to answer and return the enclosed survey to enable me to better represent your interests. Your input and views are so important to me. You may also complete the survey online at my Web site: www.in.gov/H36.

My legislative committee appointments are:

- Vice Chairperson of Commerce and Economic Development
- Technology, Research and Development
- Ways and Means, and
- Public Policy, Ethics and Veterans Affairs.

These committee appointments will enable me to mold ideas to bring new and better paying jobs to Indiana and our district.

Thank you for the opportunity to represent you, your family and our community. Please contact me whenever I may be of service or assistance to you on matters concerning state government.

Terri J. Austin



The legislative chamber of the Indiana House of Representatives.

Educational opportunities for all our citizens must be protected and enhanced to meet future workplace requirements.

2003 Legislative Survey

Please fill out the survey and mail it to me, or [complete the survey online at www.in.gov/H36](http://www.in.gov/H36). Another member of your household may respond in the second set of answers.

1. What areas should be a priority when developing Indiana's 2003-2005 biennial budget? (Please rank in area of priority, with #1 being highest.)

- ___ ___ Education.
- ___ ___ Economic development.
- ___ ___ Tax relief for Hoosiers.
- ___ ___ Improvements to roads, bridges or other infrastructure.
- ___ ___ Maintaining critical government services.
- ___ ___ Other (please list). _____

2. Do you favor creation of a plan that would enable Indiana to create compacts with other states in order to purchase prescription drugs at more affordable rates for residents?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. Would you favor directing the use of lottery and other gaming funds to support ongoing expenses, such as public education?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. Should Indiana adopt daylight savings time?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

5. Do you favor giving the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission the authority to levy stiffer fines and other penalties against companies that refuse to follow state laws, rules and regulations?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

6. Do you favor giving the Indiana Utility Regulatory Commission the authority to oversee mergers that involve out of state or international interests?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

7. With Indiana still recovering from the national recession, it is likely that lawmakers will have to make tough decisions in formulating a new biennial budget. Which of these options do you favor in making those decisions? (Please rank in order of preference with #1 being highest.)

- ___ ___ Cutting existing state programs.
- ___ ___ Raising additional state revenue through increased taxes.
- ___ ___ Suspending some tax cuts until the economy has rebounded.
- ___ ___ Using alternative sources for revenue, such as lottery and gaming funds, to shore up existing programming.
- ___ ___ Delaying the effective date of the next property reassessment.

8. Should the state expand ISTEP testing to include all grades and core subject areas?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

9. What should be the state's priority in education funding? (Please rank in order of priority with #1 being highest.)

- ___ ___ Expanded testing.
- ___ ___ Full-day kindergarten.
- ___ ___ Teacher training and professional development.
- ___ ___ School construction and renovation.
- ___ ___ Reduction in class sizes.
- ___ ___ Support for Pre-Kindergarten.

10. Public employees in Indiana have not received a pay raise in nearly two years. Do they deserve a salary increase?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No



Representative
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House of
Representatives



Stay in touch

with Representative Austin
and the Indiana General Assembly

The 113th Session of the Indiana Legislature has just convened. Below are some of the ways to stay involved.

Online

The official Web site for the State of Indiana is at www.in.gov. This is a good place to start if you're interested in information about Indiana and various government services.

Additionally, each representative has a Web site with information on his or her background, education and contact information. My site is at www.in.gov/H36. There you may also learn about bills that I have filed, read past newsletters, and apply to become a page or an intern.

E-mail updates

Would you like to receive e-mail updates with news from the Statehouse? You are always encouraged to contact me directly via e-mail, but I would also be happy to send you news from time to time about what is going on at the Statehouse.

To receive updates, e-mail me at H36@in.gov and ask to have your name added to the list, or **just include your e-mail address on the front of the survey response card**. It's a simple way to stay informed about the issues that impact our state and our district.

Becoming a page

Serving as a page during the 2003 session allows any child age 13 or older the opportunity to gain a firsthand glimpse of how the legislative system works. Students will be excused from school on the day they are serving as a page and will spend the entire day at the Statehouse.

Interested students should send me their name, parent or guardian's name, address, phone number, school and two different dates when the student could come to the Statehouse between now and late April, 2003.

Please note that positions fill up quickly, so apply as soon as possible!

In person

Sessions of the Indiana General Assembly are open to the public. You may observe the House yourself, seeing our democratic system at work. No need to schedule an appointment—you're always welcome. The House chamber has a visitors' gallery on the fourth floor from which you can view proceedings.

Whichever method you prefer, I hope that you'll keep informed and stay involved.

Please place
your stamp
here.

Yes!

Add my e-mail address to your update list!

My e-mail address is:

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